



Your Fishing for Customers Guide

Chuck McKay



What Are Core Values [We Believe] Documents?

Please do not confuse Core Values with Mission Statements or Vision Statements.

Those statements are often considered by business owners to be business school academic exercises without application in the real world.

Your ***Core Values Document*** is not simply an academic exercise.

It is not created by a committee to satisfy a board of directors or the company attorneys.

Instead, it's created by the company founder, and becomes the standard against which every aspect of the company's operation is determined.

This Single Page May Be The Most Important Business Document You Possess

Defining your company's Core Values provides standards for employee reviews, promotions, demotions, bonuses, and instructional opportunities.

Core Values Statements are simple, and action oriented. There is no room for (nor need for) employee interpretation.

Let's Look At Some Examples

Their respective companies did not create the examples on the next two pages. I placed information from their web pages into this uniform format to make those values more easily understood.

I recommend this format. Its value will become self-evident as we explore the creation of your own ***Core Values Document***.

EXAMPLES:

Core Values Document

Why We Exist:
Customer Service shouldn't be just a department, it should be the entire company.

Our Values in Action:

- Deliver WOW through service.
- Embrace and drive change.
- Create fun and a little weirdness.
- Be adventurous, creative, and open minded.
- Pursue growth and learning.
- Build open and honest relationships with communication.
- Build a positive team and family spirit.
- Do more with less.
- Be passionate and determined.
- Be humble.

Zappos Shoes, Clothing, and More
Powered by service.

Core Values Document

Why We Exist:
We use robotics to get children excited about science.

Our Values in Action:

- We are a team.
- We do the work to find solutions and guidance from our coaches and mentors.
- We know our coaches and mentors don't have all the answers; we learn together.
- We honor the spirit of friendly competition.
- What we discover is more important than what we win.
- We share our experience with others.
- We display Gracious Professionalism® and Coopertition* in everything we do.
- We have fun.

First Lego League
Teaching 9 to 16-year-olds valuable
employment and life skills.

Core Values Document

Why We Exist:

Google makes it easy to find the information you need.

Our Values in Action:

- Focus on the user and all else will follow.
- It's best to do one thing really, really well.
- Fast is better than slow.
- Democracy on the web works.
- You don't need to be at your desk to need an answer.
- You can make money without doing evil.
- There's always more information out there.
- The need for information crosses all borders.
- You can be serious without a suit.
- Great just isn't good enough.

Google

We organize the world's information

Core Values Document

Why We Exist:

Rentoid connects owners and renters of almost anything.

Our Values in Action:

- Action:
- We will never have gray, or any color cubicles.
- Our people work where they please, geographically.
- We trust each other; we don't confuse people with our language.
- We don't trick people with terms and conditions.
- We speak like people. We are people.
- We answer our phone calls.
- We use our brains first and our wallets second.
- We don't work with jerks.
- Fun at work is more important than all things.
- We believe in opposites. The opposite of buying and selling is keeping, recycling, renting.

Rentoid, the E-Bay of Renting
Rent anything from anyone,
or have someone rent from you.

Notice the Specificity In Each of Our Examples

There are no unsubstantiated claims about being industry leaders or achieving excellence. No buzz words. These examples do not use superlatives, generalities, or self-promotional language.

Each explains, clearly and succinctly, what the company does, and for whom.

And most importantly, by their actions they demonstrate company values.

Do You Feel as if You Know These Companies?

Is there any question in your mind about what each company values? When each value is expressed as an action, we intuitively understand how each is run.

Customers understand. Employees understand. Investors understand.

Tell me that you practice “fiscal restraint” and you simply sound cheap. But saying that you “use imagination before reaching for your wallet,” you let everyone know that you’ll spend what you have to when necessary, but that you first look for alternatives to increased spending. That message is completely different.

What About Writing An Operations Manual?

You’ll never manage to cover every eventuality. But by making your value statements simple and action oriented, there will be no need for employee interpretation. When employees truly understand the core values your company embraces you’ll find you can rely on their common sense to make the right choices.

The Tools

All you’ll need to create your *Core Values Document* is the *Core Values Catalog*, and the *Core Values Document Worksheet*, which follow.



How to Create Your Core Values [We Believe] Statement

1. Select no fewer than 5, no more than 10 values from the Core Values Catalog.
2. List those values in the left-most column of the Core Values Document Worksheet.
 - List those absolute, unshakable principles that you would close your business rather than violate, in the Critical Values section. Rank them from more to less important.
 - List those principles that influence your daily decision-making, your behaviors, and your actions in the Important Values Section. Rank them from more to less important.
3. Describe actions, which demonstrate your values, in the three blanks to the right of each value.
 - The format is: action (expressed as a verb), affected population, and outcome. Follow the example in the Core Values Sample Worksheet.
4. Now that you can see your core values, summarize your company's Business Purpose in eight words or less. The simpler the statement the more effective it becomes.
5. Rewrite your values into short, declarable sentences. Keep them simple and action oriented. Start each with "We Believe."

Core Values [We Believe] Document Worksheet

Your Company's Purpose:

What is your company attempting to accomplish, in 8 words or less? Write simply. Absolutely no ad-speak.

Have fun making sustainable widgets.

Critical Values:

What are the absolute, unshakable principles that you'd close the business rather than violate?

Value	Action	Affects	(Outcome)
Empowerment ^{1.}	Authorize	employees	resolve customer prob.
Positive ^{2.}	Hire	happy, productive people	happy, productive work place
Personal Growth ^{3.}	Promote	employees	provide opportunities
Innovation ^{4.}	Invest	in research	20% of net profit
^{5.}			

Important Values:

Which principles actively influence your decisions, your behaviors, your actions?

Value	Action	Affects	(Outcome)
Safety ^{6.}	Apply	safety standards	exceeds legal min.
Openness ^{7.}	Admit	to employees and public	when we're wrong
Respect ^{8.}	Listen	to customers	without interrupting
^{9.}			
^{10.}			

Format: action verb, affected population, (expressed outcome).



Core Values [We Believe] Document Completed Example Worksheet

Why We Exist

Ajax Company has fun making sustainable widgets.

Our Values in Action

- We believe our associates should have full authority to resolve customer complaints at the first contact.
- We believe creating a happy, productive workplace starts by hiring happy, productive people.
- We believe supervisory or management openings in our company should be filled by promoting our own employees before looking outside the company.
- We believe that staying competitive and providing greater levels of service to our customers starts with investing 20% of our net earnings in research.
- We believe our employees deserve a safe workplace. Meeting the legal minimums is not enough. Our objective is zero accidents.
- We believe in communicating openly and transparently with the public, and with each other, by admitting our mistakes and indicating the steps we'll take to prevent another occurrence.
- We believe in listening without interruption when our customers have something to tell us.

Ajax Widget Company
Work should be fun and satisfying

Values Catalog, 1 of 5

Abundance	Adoration	Ambition	Attentiveness
Acceptance	Adroitness	Amusement	Attractiveness
Accessibility	Advancement	Anticipation	Audacity
Accomplishment	Adventurousness	Appreciation	Authenticity
Accountability	Affection	Approachability	Authority
Accuracy	Affluence	Articulateness	Availability
Accuracy	Aggressiveness	Artistic	Awareness
Achievement	Agility	Assertiveness	
Acknowledgement	Alertness	Aesthetics	
Adaptability	Altruism	Athletic	

Balance	Benevolence	Boldness	Brilliance
Beauty	Bliss	Bravery	

Calmness	Clarity	Concern	Cooperation
Camaraderie	Cleanliness	Confidence	Cooperation
Candor	Cleverness	Conformity	Coordination
Capability	Comfort	Connection	Coordination
Carefulness	Commitment	Consistency	Cordiality
Caring	Communication	Constructiveness	Courage
Certainty	Community	Contentment	Courage
Challenge	Compassion	Contentment	Courtesy
Charisma	Compassion	Contribution	Craftiness
Charity	Competence	Control	Creativity
Charity	Competency	Conviction	Credibility
Charm	Composure	Conviviality	Cunning
Cheerfulness	Concentration	Cooperation	Curiosity



Values Catalog, 2 of 5

Daring	Disciplined	Determination	Dominance
Decorum	Discovery	Devotion	Dreaming
Deference	Discretion	Devoutness	Driving
Dependability	Decisiveness	Dignity	Duty
Diligence	Delight	Discipline	Dynamism
Direction	Dependability	Distinguish	
Directness	Desire	Diversity	
Eagerness	Empathy	Enthusiasm	Exploration
Economic	Empowerment	Equality	Exploration
Ecstasy	Encouragement	Ethics	Expressiveness
Educated	Endurance	Excitement	Extroversion
Effectiveness	Energy	Exhilaration	Exuberance
Efficiency	Enjoyment	Expectancy	
Elation	Enlightenment	Experience	
Elegance	Entertainment	Expertise	
Faith	Ferocity	Focus	Frugality
Fairness	Fidelity	Forgiving	Fulfillment
Fame	Fitness	Fortitude	Fun Loving
Family Orientation	Flexibility	Frankness	Functionality
Fearlessness	Flair	Freedom	
Fashion	Fluency	Friendliness	
Gallantry	Gentleness	Goodwill	Gregariousness
Generosity	Giving	Grace	Growing
Gentility	Global	Gratitude	

Values Catalog, 3 of 5

Happiness	Helpfulness	Honor	Humility
Harmony	Heroism	Hopefulness	Humor
Health	Honesty	Hospitality	
Imagination	Information	Insight	Intensity
Impartiality	Ingenuity	Inspiring	Intimacy
Independence	Initiative	Integration	Introversion
Individuality	Inner peace	Integrity	Intuitiveness
Industry	Innovation	Intellect	Inventiveness
Influence	Inquisitiveness	Intelligence	
Joviality	Joy	Justice	Judicious
Kindness	Knowledgeable		
Leadership	Liberty	Logic	Loyalty
Learning	Lively	Loving	Luxury
Mastery	Merriment	Mindfulness	Money
Meaningful	Meticulousness	Modesty	Motivated
Nurturing	Notable		
Objectiveness	Open mindedness	Optimism	Originality
Observant	Openness	Orderliness	Over performance
Oneness	Opportunism	Organization	Ownership



Values Catalog, 4 of 5

Passion	Physical challenges	Pragmatism	Prominence
Patriotism	Piety	Precision	Prosperous
Peacefulness	Playfulness	Predictability	Prudence
Perception	Pleasure	Preparedness	Punctuality
Perfection	Poise	Presence	Piety
Perseverance	Positive	Preservation	
Persistence	Powerful	Privacy	
Personal growth	Practicality	Progressive	
Philanthropy			
Quality	Quick witted	Quiet	
Realistic	Relationships	Resolve	Responsiveness
Reasonability	Reliability	Resource utilization	Restraint
Recognition	Religious	Resourcefulness	Results orientation
Regal	Resilience	Respect	Risk taking
Regularity	Resolute	Responsibility	Romantic
Safety	Self-made	Sharing	Stability
Satisfied	Self-reliance	Shrewdness	Standardization
Security	Self-respect	Sincerity	Status
Self-assured	Sensible	Skill	Stealth
Self-control	Sensual	Solitude	Strength
Selflessness	Serene	Speed	Striving
Self-improvement	Service	Spirituality	Supportive
		Spontaneity	Systematic

Values Catalog, 5 of 5

Teaching	Thoughtfulness	Tolerance	Triumphant
Teamwork	Thrift	Toughness	Trusting
Tenderness	Time freedom	Trail blazing	Trustworthy
Thankfulness	Timeliness	Tranquility	Truthful
Thoroughness	Tireless	Transcendence	
Unbeatable	Understanding	United	Unwavering
Uncompromising	Uniqueness	Unselfish	Uplifting
Variety	Virtue	Vision	Vitality
Vigorous	Virtuous	Vital	Vivacity
			Vulnerable
Warmth	Well-being	Wholeness	Works with others
Warm hearted	Well behaved	Wisdom	
Welcoming	Welcoming	Works alone	
Youthful			
Zealous			



Core Values [We Believe] Document Worksheet

Your Company's Purpose:

What is your company attempting to accomplish, in 8 words or less? Write simply. Absolutely no adspeak.

Critical Values:

What are the absolute, unshakable principles that you'd close the business rather than violate?

Value	Action	Affects	(Outcome)
_____	1. _____	_____	_____
_____	2. _____	_____	_____
_____	3. _____	_____	_____
_____	4. _____	_____	_____
_____	5. _____	_____	_____

Important Values:

Which principles actively influence your decisions, your behaviors, your actions?

Value	Action	Affects	(Outcome)
_____	6. _____	_____	_____
_____	7. _____	_____	_____
_____	8. _____	_____	_____
_____	9. _____	_____	_____
_____	10. _____	_____	_____

Format: action verb, affected population, (expressed outcome).

How to Use Core Values [We Believe]

Now you have standards for employee reviews, promotions, demotions, bonuses, and instructional opportunities. Your Core Values Document [We Believe] becomes the standard against which you'll determine every aspect of your company's operation.

Core Values [We Believe] Usage

- Give this document to Human Resources, it's a hiring instrument.
- Give it to employees, it's a procedure manual
- Give it to your merchandisers. It's guidance for signage, architecture, and décor.
- Give it to your sales department. It's a training manual.
- Give it to your marketing department. It's an advertising overview.
- Give it to your customer relations staff. It's a policy manual.
- Give it to your customers. It's a customer acquisition tool.
- Give it to your board of directors. It's a long term business plan.

By keeping the statements simple and action oriented there is no room for (or need for) employee interpretation.

This single page may be the most important business document you possess.

